

# SAINT LOUIS BIRD CLUB BULLETIN

Official Organ of the Saint Louis Bird Club  
for the Protection of  
Bird Enjoyment, Bird Study and Bird Conservation

Vol. 3

March 14, 1934

Number 3

## THE MARCH MEETING

will be held Wednesday, March 21st at 8 P. M., at the Cabany Branch Library. Special feature of this meeting will be colored slides of some of our birds with remarks by three speakers. These speakers will point out the distinguishing marks whereby you can identify birds that are easily confused. The three speakers will divide the birds up according to the late check list. First speaker selects from the list down to the Sandpipers; second speaker, down to the woodpeckers; and third, to the end. They will not take up every bird, but only those that will give the average bird enthusiast trouble. Accordingly, this will be a program especially for the novice. Why not bring your friends whom you wish to interest in bird-study?

## SPRING BIRD WALKS

will be conducted as usual in the city parks chiefly during April. At its last meeting our executive board decided to conduct five Saturday walks and four Sunday walks in Forest Park. The dates will be the Saturdays March 31, April 7, 14, 21, 28; and Sundays April 8, 15, 22, 29. They will begin from the Jefferson Memorial Building at 6.30 A. M. and pass the rear entrance of the Art Museum at 7.30 where they will pick up such participants as cannot come early.

At Shaw's Garden there will be four Saturday walks. April 7, 14, 21, 28 at 7 A. M. Those participating will meet at the entrance gate where Mr. Barrell will begin the walk.

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## METHODS OF ATTRACTING BIRDS

(Topic of the month by Tom Kirksey)

In order to create a good bird sanctuary, and one which will be popular with birds of many species, there are several necessities. First and foremost, protection from enemies; secondly, plenty of suitable food; and thirdly, ample and proper nesting sites.

It seems appropriate at this time to take Dresser's Island and vicinity as an example of a possible sanctuary, and to discuss its needs as such. Naturally, the following would apply to almost any similar territory.

Pertaining to protection, the most advisable thing would be to construct a cat and dog-proof fence around the whole area on the landward side. A structure such as this would mean not only a durable and fairly fine-meshed fence, but also a protruding border of about three strands of barbed wire around the top to prevent cats and children from climbing over. If finances, or other difficulties, prevent the erecting of the fence, probably the only solution would be to have wardens patrol the sanctuary against vagrants. Also provide trees, which would make favorable nesting sites, with metal guards, fastened around the trunk, to secure the tree against most nest-robbing animals. Under no circumstances would the persecution of the birds of prey be advisable as a measure of protection, even though the eagles and other Raptores are present at Dresser's Island in considerable numbers. If the birds are secured against man and his devices, the balance of nature will prevent the necessity of killing hawks and owls in a bird sanctuary.

The most important fact that must be remembered about attracting birds

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#### CLUB OFFICERS

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Dr. A. A. Allan was met by a large and interested audience for his sound-film and picture lecture, March 9th at the Soldan High School. He conveyed the songs of many of our famous songsters and showed in color the outstanding birds of yard and garden. His lecture dealt with phases of courtship and motives behind certain actions and habits which are not commonly understood. The St. Louis Academy of Science and the St. Louis Bird Club both feel well repaid for having brought Dr. Allan to this city.

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We are glad to inform our membership that the Hadley Vocational School is going to do our mimeograph work from now on, charging us only for materials used. This is a great service to the club and particularly to the Editorial Committee. We hereby take this opportunity to extend our thanks to the school for we certainly appreciate this favor.

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Ruffed Grouse will be distributed in the southern section of our state, says State Game and Fish Commissioner, Wilbur Buford. Five pairs of the birds have been purchased to begin with. The Ozarks will probably be selected as suitable breeding grounds.

#### PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The time is fast approaching when the birds will be here in greatest numbers. If we members of the bird club are to get the maximum benefit and joy from this years migration, it behooves us to put forth a little effort toward such ends. The executive committee has thought it advisable to increase the number of walks this year so as to give every one an opportunity to go at least once a week under competent leaders. The hour of meeting has been put earlier in the morning so that these walks will occur at that period of the day when the birds are singing and are so engaged with their own immediate problems, as to be less disturbed by those of us who want to see them. During these hours more can be learned about the birds than at any other time and more of them can be seen. I am asking, therefore, that for each week in April, every member of the club put a circle around either Sunday or Saturday on his calendar, and reserve the morning hours of that day for bird-study and enjoyment.

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From Washington comes the news that a brick-red Quail, a brand-new type of bird never seen before, is being given a chance to develop under the special care of scientists of the Smithsonian Institute and others.

The red bobwhite suddenly appeared among flocks of the ordinary brown and white quail in the Southeastern states.

#### NEW MEMBERS

Jane Gallagher, 118 W. Woodbine Ave., Kirkwood.  
George Seth Guion, New Orleans, Louisiana.  
Harriet Martindell, 7747 Weaver Ave., Maplewood.  
G. Howard Willett, 624 Pierce Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

#### NOTICE

If your bulletin is incorrectly addressed, please notify the Secretary, Jeff. 1587, or write c/o Educ. Museum, 3325 Bell Ave.



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#### SOME SIMILAR SONGS DISTINGUISHED

The Vireos constitute one family of Birds, the members of which are so nearly colored alike it is often better to identify them by song. In the first place we must separate them from the Warblers with which they may also be confused. The chief characteristic of the Vireos that sets them apart from them is they feed with deliberation, sing between bites, and do a great deal of deliberate peering around under the leaves. The Warblers are much more restless, so much so that, together with their smaller beak, they may be taken out of the picture. Fortunately most of the Warblers are too brightly colored to be confused with the duller colored Vireos.

The Red-eyed Vireo may be distinguished from the Yellow-throated in song by the fact that he is continuous and almost incessant, whereas the latter sings at rather long intermissions, much more distinct and always louder. The yellow throat distinguishes the latter also. The White-eyed Vireo has a song more like a warbler and therefore, should not be confused with the other Vireos. It is a jerky warble. The Warbling Vireo differs from this in the fact that it has a soft melodious warble like the Purple Finch. Fortunately the Purple Finch is gone by the time the Warbling Vireos arrive from the South, but the crimson of the Finch and conical beak characterize him. The Blue-headed Vireo occasions a much more serious problem for its song sounds like a Red-eyed, except it is often more of a buzz, caused by the slurring of the notes together closer. However, the white circle around the eye of the Blue-headed Vireo distinguishes it from all other Vireos. There is another Vireo distinct from all of these that is the Philadelphia Vireo. It sings very much like the Red-eyed except, if you are well acquainted with the latter you say there is something radically wrong with the singer. The color of the Philadelphia Vireo is not a help in the average case to judge by.

At O'Fallon Park a walk will be conducted Sunday April 29th at 8 A. M. for the benefit chiefly of the school children of that section. The walks will be started from the southwest entrance of the park next to the little bird-sanctuary.

At Coronadelet Park a walk will also be conducted Sunday April 29th at 8 A. M. The starting point will be the North Grand Avenue entrance. This walk is also planned in the interest of the novice.

For all these city park walks the club has for its motive to interest the novice and amateur. Your committee is doing extensive advertising to the public about these walks this year, and we believe large crowds will come out. Since we have walks at three different parks on April 29th there will be need for many volunteer leaders from our membership. Will you not keep this date especially in mind; and we can still use more leaders in Forest Park throughout the month of April. We ought to have, in addition to the chief man in charge of a morning trip, several helpers, so that the crowd may be split up into groups not too large for efficient work. we believe we can depend upon our members to cooperate in this greatest advertising campaign that we could inaugurate, so give your name to the President immediately, if you will act as leader.

In addition to these park walks we have been a little more selfish and scheduled two walks for our own interests particularly. May 5th and 6th have been selected as Club Days. On Saturday a thorough all day trip will be taken at Creve Coeur, beginning at daybreak. On the Sunday a trip to Dresser's Island is suggested. This is also to be an all day affair.

Another walk planned, to which the public is also invited, is one to the junction of Delmar & Old Bonhomme Road. This is good territory. Our two able juniors  
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Foster and Zahn will conduct the Club over this territory Sunday, April 22, beginning at 6 A. M. from the junction of Delmar and Old Bonhomme Road - - this is at the end of Delmar.

THE WIDMANN MEMORIAL BULLETIN has been delayed due to unforeseen interference. It is now in the hands of the printer and will be distributed this month. Additional copies (outside of regular subscription) will be sold by the secretary, Miss Elizabeth Goltermann, -- The Educational Museum, 3325 Bell Ave., at the price of twenty-five cents each.

THE FEBRUARY MEETING of the St. Louis Bird Club was devoted almost entirely to the speech of Mr. Clark McAdams. He spoke on facts pertaining to the establishment of sanctuaries at Dresser's Island and vicinity as well as around our city. He conveyed many interesting accounts of birdlife as it formerly was in those areas and how it ought to return if these new sanctuaries can be built.

#### NEWS

The Duck Stamp Bill was introduced at the last session of Congress. It is to provide for a dollar stamp to be required of every hunter of ducks. The money thus received is to be used for restoring duck-breeding grounds, in an effort to save the ducks.

News comes from northwestern Texas that during October and November of last year the Sandhill Crane became so common as to be a pest on account of their destruction of crops. This abundance is only local, but it is a factor rendering enforcement of bird-protective laws difficult in that section.

Another serious problem to sea birds and other marine life is the polluting of the water with refuse oil. No duck can survive this poison and the menace takes annually a great toll. It forms a close second to the draining of swamps in importance.

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#### METHODS OF ATTRACTING BIRDS

(cont. from first page)

to nest is that undergrowth is as necessary as the large trees. It makes very little difference what trees prevail in the area, so long as there is an abundance and variety of thicket and underbrush. Some birds prefer open ground, but there is enough of that in the vicinity of the island so that it would not be necessary to sacrifice any of the woods. Especially desirable are thorny thickets and evergreens. The latter are of prime importance as a source of perpetual food supply, and as a protection from the elements, as well as because of the nesting sites they offer.

Many pages might be given to listing the flora favorable to birds, but since space is limited, I shall follow with a necessarily brief list of the most desirable trees, plants, and shrubs, quoted in part from E. H. Baynes' book Wild Bird Guests. Fortunately, some of the species are already growing on the site of our proposed sanctuary.

#### SUMMER TREES

White Mulberry, *Morus alba*, (introd)  
Red Mulberry, *Morus rubra*.  
Bird Cherry Shrubs, *Prunus pennsylvanica*.  
Shad Bush, *Amelanchier canadensis*.  
Blue Cornel, *Cornus alternifolia*.  
Tartarian Honeysuckle, *Lonicera tatarica* (introd.)  
Rdd-berried Elder, *Sambucus racemosa*.  
sa. AUTUMN TREES

Flowering Dogwood, *Cornus florida*.  
White Thorn, *Crataegus Arnoldiana*.  
Bird Cherry Shrubs, *Prunus serotina*.  
Silky Cornel, *Cornus Amomum*.  
Gray Cornel, *Cornus paniculata*.  
Common Elder, *Sambucus canadensis*.  
Withe-rod, *Viburnum cassinoides*.  
Frost Grape, *Vitis vulpina*.  
Arrow-wood Vines, *Viburnum dentatum*.

#### WINTER TREES

Gray Birch, *Betula populifolia*.  
Cockspur Thorn, *Crataegus Crus-galli*.  
European Mountain Ash, *Pyrus Aucuparia*, (introd.)  
Siberian Crab-apple, *Pyrus baccata*, (introd.)  
Barberry, *Berberis vulgaris*.  
Black Alder, *Ilex verticillata*.

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# METHODS OF ATTRACTING BIRDS

(cont. from page 66)

Common Privet, *ligustrum vulgare*.  
Buckthorn, *Rhamnus cathartica*.  
 Sheepberry, *Viburnum Lentage*.  
 Black Haw Vines, *Viburnum prunifolium*.  
 Virginia Creeper, *Psedera quinquefolia*.  
 Summer Grape, *Vitis aestivalis*.

## SPRING TREES

Washington Thron, *Crataegus Phaenopyrum*, (introd.)  
 American Larch, *Larix americana*.  
European Larch, *larix decidua*, (introd.)  
 Flowering Crab-apple Shrubs, *Pyrus floribunda*, (introd.)  
Japanese Barberry, *Berberis Thunbergii*, (introd.)  
 Wild Roses, *Rosa sp.*  
Sumacs (non-poisonous), *Rhus sp.*  
High-bush Cranberry Vines, *Viburnum Opulus*.  
False Bittersweet, *Celastrus Orbiculatus*, (introd.) Also *Celastrus scandens*.  
 Boston Ivy, *Psedera tricuspidata*.

## ATTRACTIVE EVERGREENS

Red Cedar, *Juniperus virginiana*.  
Norway Spruce, *Picea Albies*.  
White Spruce, *Picea canadensis*.  
 Black Spruce, *Picea nigra*.  
 Red Spruce, *Picea rubra*.  
 White Pine, *Pinus strobus*.  
Norway Pine, *Pinus resinosa*.  
Douglas Spruce, *Pseudotsuga taxifolia*, (introd.)  
 Japanese Yew, *Taxus cuspidata*, (introd.)  
 Hemlock, *Tsuga canadensis*.

The red cedar is probably the most attractive tree to birds in general, of any other single kind in the country. It furnishes nesting sites for innumerable species, and food and shelter at all seasons of the year.

In the case of the territory in question it would also be advisable to plant laurel, rhododendron, and wild celery. The latter especially because it is popular food with wild ducks. Buckwheat is excellent, and as probably everyone knows, hemp, millet, and sunflowers should be left stand-

(next column)

# THE "FLIGHT SONG"

(continued from last issue)

Woodcock: Rendered usually at night, and more famous for its peculiar phenomenon than for music. Brasher, "At courting time, and all through the period of incubation, the male indulges in a curious aerial dance. Soon after sunset he whirls up in spirals, chirping and twittering, to a height of fifty or sixty feet, through circles horizontally and descends, giving voice to his ecstasy in a continuous "chirping" until he reaches the ground where he struts like a tiny turkey-gobbler, with drooping wings and upright spread tail, changing his notes to a series of rather hard "paiks." On moonlight nights, I have listened to this serenade until after 9 o'clock.

Pectoral Sandpiper: Brasher, "during the mating season the male of this species develops a great pouch, formed of the skin of the throat and breast, which he is able to inflate until it is nearly as large as the body. He now becomes a song-bird and flutters upward twenty or thirty yards in the air, as if emulating the famous Skylark, and, inflating his great pouch, glides down again to the ground."

White-throated Sparrow: White, "It is night, very still, very dark. The subdued murmur of the forest ebbs and flows with the voices of the furtive folk, an undertone fearful to break the night calm. Suddenly across the dusk of silence flashes a single thread of silver, vibrating, trembling with some unguessed ecstasy of emotion, 'Ah! poor Canada, Canada, Canada,' it murmurs passionately." (next page).  
 ing wherever possible. Pokeberry is good for attracting finches, and wild rice and pond weed are attractive to water fowl. The scattering of various types of food after snowstorms is very advisable, to tide over the winter birds until they are able to procure food for themselves again.

We all sincerely hope that such a sanctuary will be possible here in the near future.



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# FIELD OBSERVATIONS

(Address communications relative to this department to Tom Kirksey 33 Arundel Place, St. Louis, Mo.)

The month of February, in spite of its severe snows, had spots of such enticing weather that the Robins returned in large numbers. But there was hardly a day that there was not a covering of ice over the still bodies of water, and a good deal of ice in the rivers.

Ducks have been much in evidence during the month, a total of eight species having been reported.

"Orchids" to George Foster and Bob Zahm for the month's best list: Feb. 3, Duck Hawk and Kri-der's Hawk in the vicinity of St. Clair, Mo.; Feb. 17, on a trip in- to the southern part of the state they saw 36 species, including Cowbird, Field Sparrow, and Fine Siskin (two flocks with a total of about 200 individuals, in the Black River Valley); Feb. 22, on the way to Kansas City, they saw the Blue-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Western Meadowlark, Marsh Hawk, in gray phase; Feb. 24, Ring-billed Gull at Creve Coeur Lake; Feb. 25, Mallard, Pintail, Black Duck, American Merganser and Rus-ty Blackbird, Lesser Scaup.

The two boys also report that a flock of European Tree Sparrows that has been staying near the end of Delmar Blvd., at Bonhomme Road has moved to the vicinity of The University City Golf Course club house, which is about a quarter of a mile north. There are but a few individuals at the old location.

Forest Park harbored Starlings in increasing numbers as the month progressed. Flocks as large as from 50 to 100 were seen frequently. There was also a no- ticable influx of Robins especi- ally after the snow melted. The Bobwhite coveys are still there. During the snowy periods a flock of 8 Cedar Waxwings was found. On Feb. 27, a mixed flock of Prairie and Northern Horned Larks was seen on Art Hill by the writer.

Miss Ernst found the Horned  
(continued next column)

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Grebe at Horseshoe Lake, Illinois, on or about Feb. 25. It was in the company of flock of Ameri- can Mergansers.

.....  
• Everyone is urged to take as .  
• many bird trips as possible .  
• during the Spring Migration .  
• Period, and send their re- .  
• ports to this department .  
• If there is sufficient re- .  
• sponse the May number of the .  
• bulletin may be devoted al- .  
• most entirely to this report. .  
.....

## THE "FLIGHT SONG"

(continued from last page)

Worm-eating Warbler: Burroughs: "The bird has a flight song, ut- tered near sundown, nearly as bril- liant as that of the Oven-bird."

Mockingbird: Forbush, "The Mock- er is more or less a buffoon, but those who look upon him only as an imitator or clown have much to learn of his wonderful originality. His own song is heard at its best at the height of the love season where the singer flutters into the air from some tall tree-top and im- provises his music, pouring out all power and energy of his being in such an ecstasy of song that, ex- hausting his strength in the su- preme effort, he slowly floats on quivering, beating pinions down through the bloom-covered branches until, his fervor spent, he sinks to the ground below. His expanded wings and tail flashing with white in the sunlight and the bouyancy of his action appeal to the eye as his music captivates the ear. On moon- lit nights at this season the in- spired singer launches himself far into the air, filling the silvery spans of the night with the exqui- site swells and trills, liquid and sweet, of his unparalleled melody. The song rises and falls as the powers of the singer wax and wane, and so he serenades his mate through- out the live-long night. One such singer wins others to emulate and as the chorus grows, little birds of the field and orchard wake just enough to join briefly in the swell- ing tide of avian melody."